

INTRODUCTION

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“We shall show them Our signs upon the horizons and within themselves, until it is clear to them that it is the truth” (41:53) – the Koran

“Each of the Nine Points is represented by one of nine saints who are at the highest level in the Divine Presence. They are the keys to unfold powers within the human being, **but there is no permission to use these keys.**”¹ – Shaykh Abd Allah al-Faiz ad-Daghestani

“[I]f an idea is true, it belongs equally to all who are capable of understanding it; if it is false, there is no credit in having invented it. A true idea cannot be ‘new’, for truth is not a product of the human mind; it exists independently of us, and all we have to do is to take cognizance of it; outside this knowledge there can be nothing but error”² – René Guénon

The enigmatic origins of the nine pointed symbol known as the Enneagram (*ennea* in Greek means “nine,” and *gram* means something “written” or “drawn”) have captivated and perplexed human individuals since its appearance in the modern West. There are fewer potent examples that so blatant exemplify esoteric knowledge being appropriated by popular culture as the case with the Enneagram. That the nine pointed figure of the Enneagram has entered into the mainstream illustrates its strange fate and perhaps the fate of all things of a transcendent nature: “[T]he enneagram was arguably the worst-kept secret in spiritual history.”³ The Enneagram has generated a great deal of speculation about its origins and no less its application, yet it for the most part remains veiled in its own secret as what is fact or fiction or even allegory is unknown. Although the Enneagram may be as old as Babylon and the following estimation exemplifies the various efforts to unveil this ancient symbol, still its origins are not made any more intelligible to contemporaries: “I concluded...that this symbol and the ideas for which it stands, originated with the Sarmān society about 2500 years ago and was revised when the power of the Arabic numerical system was developed in Samarkand in the fifteenth century”.⁴

The Enneagram has departed from the fringes of a pop psychology or New Age fad to the mainstream. We can see how the Enneagram is—“a sleeping giant, awakened in our times”⁵—through its wide-ranging utility: as a personnel tool for corporate America in the early 1990s Stanford Graduate School of Business launched its first course on the Enneagram entitled “Personality, Self-Awareness and Leadership”, the U.S. Postal Service uses it for conflict resolution, the CIA has adopted it to analyze the behavior of world leaders, even clergy from the Vatican participated in Enneagram seminars.⁶ Enneagram is now on the global marketplace as a big business commodity, proliferating workshops, seminars and scores of publications to the world at large. An International Enneagram Association (IEA) was established in 1994 during the first International Enneagram conference, sponsored by the Department of Psychiatry at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. There has also been empirical research conducted on the Enneagram.⁷ The mass popularization of the Enneagram has also led to divergent understandings of where the Enneagram originally derived and how it is to be applied. This issue has become very heated and contentious and some have interestingly attempted to assert copyright infringement not so much to prevent the dissemination of Enneagram per se, but an attempt to squelch heresy as in the case of Oscar Ichazo and Arica Institute, Inc. versus Helen Palmer and Harper & Row Publishers (decided July 22, 1992).⁸

Without knowing its origins, one cannot know what the Enneagram is nor its use, as these matters will be left to the winds of conjecture and subjectivity: “[T]hey have created an unending labyrinth over the descriptions and suppositions of each type with no other foundation, except for the wit of their own opinion. No wonder the contradictions amount, and there is no way they will ever get into any agreement.”⁹ What fundamentally distinguishes the sacred from the modern perspective, not only with regard to the ancient symbol of the Enneagram but all traditional symbols is their origin in an atemporal and transpersonal source, *in divinis*, rather than a man-made source. It is the traditional understanding of symbols that will sanction the integral knowledge necessary to situate them beyond a purely psychological point of view. The sapiential traditions unanimously recognize that “symbolism is of ‘non-human’ origin”.¹⁰

We must therefore demarcate two distinct ways of comprehending the Enneagram, the traditional Enneagram connected to a Divine revelation with that of the modern Enneagram which has developed through innovation and has departed from the traditional perspective. That the Enneagram has profound implications for the human psyche and its reintegration into the Supreme Identity does not suggest that it is solely a “psychological”

tool. This outlook leads to *psychologism*—the reduction of Reality to psychological criterion, which is a fundamental confusion of levels. Every sapiential tradition includes a tripartite division of the human individual, known in the various sacred languages as Spirit/Intellect, soul and body. “[M]an in his integral nature, man who is not only a physical datum but, at one and the same time, body, soul, and spirit”.¹¹ Exclusively emphasizing the human psyche at the expense of what transcends it disqualifies the legitimacy of any so-called psychology, as there cannot be an authentic “science of the soul” or rather pneumatology—“science of the Spirit”—without the inclusion of the transpersonal domain. The process by which a *reductionism* on a mass scale not only attacks but usurps all things transcendent, including the nine pointed symbol of the Enneagram, requires a discerning and contemplative eye in order to connect the dots as this process speaks loud and clear to what the French metaphysician René Guénon (1886-1951) had termed “counter-initiation”: “[T]he reign of what has been called ‘inverted spirituality’ . . . a parody of spirituality, imitating it so to speak in an inverse sense, so as to appear to be its very opposite”.¹²

G.I. GURDJIEFF INTRODUCES THE ENNEAGRAM TO THE MODERN WEST

It is commonly acknowledged that the Enneagram was first introduced to the modern West by G.I. Gurdjieff (1877-1949) of Greek and Armenian parentage. As declared by James Moore (b. 1929), a highly regarded biographer of Gurdjieff: “[T]he enneagram is *sui generis* and G.I. Gurdjieff, if not its author, is at least its first modern proponent.”¹³ Gurdjieff initially presented the nine pointed figure to his Russian pupils in Moscow and Petrograd (Saint Petersburg) in 1916. The first book to discuss the Enneagram did not appear until 1949, when P.D. Ouspensky (1878-1947), a distinguished Russian disciple released his work *In Search of the Miraculous: Fragments of an Unknown Teaching*. Ouspensky, who first met Gurdjieff in Moscow in 1915, recounts Gurdjieff’s words on the import of the nine pointed figure of the Enneagram:

Speaking in general it must be understood that the enneagram is a *universal symbol*. All knowledge can be included in the enneagram and with the help of the enneagram it can be interpreted. And in this connection only what a man is able to put into the enneagram does he actually *know*, that is, understand. What he cannot put into the enneagram makes books and libraries entirely unnecessary. *Everything* can be included and read in the enneagram.”¹⁴

The following underscores the centrality of the Enneagram to the whole of Gurdjieff’s Fourth Way system:

The most important use which Gurdjieff made of number symbolism is the figure of the enneagram, which he said contained and symbolized his whole System. His enneagram consists of a circle with the circumference divided into nine points which are joined to give a triangle and an irregular six-sided figure. Gurdjieff said that the triangle represented the presence of higher forces and that the six-sided figure stood for man. He also claimed that the enneagram was exclusive to his teaching. ‘This symbol cannot be met with anywhere in the study of “occultism,” either in books or in oral transmission,’ Ouspensky reports him as saying. ‘It was given such significance by those who knew, that they considered it necessary to keep the knowledge of it secret.’

Because of the emphasis which Gurdjieff placed on this diagram, his followers have sought high and low for the symbol in occult literature. [J.G.] Bennett [1897-1974] claims that it cannot be found anywhere; and if disciples of Gurdjieff have in fact discovered the figure, they have kept it very quiet.¹⁵

OSCAR ICHAZO, CLAUDIO NARANJO AND THE ENNEAGRAM OF PERSONALITY TYPES

Although Gurdjieff made the Enneagram known in the contemporary West, it was Oscar Ichazo (b. 1931), the Bolivian-born founder of the Arica (*arica* is a Quechua word meaning “open door”) Institute established in New York in 1971, who is recognized as having developed the system of the psychological typology of the Enneagram.¹⁶ Due to his codification of personality types, some refer to Ichazo as the “Father of the Enneagram.” Prior to establishing the Arica Institute, Ichazo founded the *Instituto de Gnoseologia* in 1968 and taught his theories of the enneagon (Ichazo’s terminology for the Enneagram) and protoanalysis (Ichazo’s terminology for the knowledge obtained from analysis of the human personality through the Enneagram) in 1969 at the *Instituto de Psicología Aplicada* in Santiago under the sponsorship of the Chilean Psychological Association.¹⁷ Ichazo discusses the process as to how he became a spiritual teacher: “I went into a divine coma for seven days. When I came out of it I knew that I should teach; it was impossible that all my good luck should be only for myself. But it took me two years to act on this decision. Then I went to Santiago and started lecturing in the Institute for Applied Psychology.”¹⁸

Due to the many unknown details of Ichazo's life, one could draw interesting parallels between Ichazo and the Peruvian-born Carlos Castaneda (1925-1998), who was himself a New Age icon, even dubbed the "Godfather of the New Age".¹⁹ Ichazo's notoriety spread to those within the counter-culture with his involvement in the 1973 cult film *The Holy Mountain* directed by Alejandro Jodorowsky (b. 1929), a Chilean-French filmmaker. All of the actors, including Jodorowsky himself participated in the Arica training before shooting the film. Apparently Jodorowsky invited Ichazo, who he recognized as a spiritual master, to come to Mexico where the film was going to be made, in order to receive his teaching and Ichazo did so by initiating Jodorowsky into his first psychedelic experience via LSD that was instrumental to his outlook. Jodorowsky was also introduced to the sensory deprivation tank by a pupil of Ichazo's on November 2, 1973, along with a score of other counter-culture and Human Potential Movement representatives.²⁰ It has been suggested that the use of psychedelic drugs was a common facet of the Arica training, which began early on in Ichazo's life when he had contact with native peoples in South America who utilized mind-altering substances: "I had contact with Indians and they introduced me to psychedelic drugs and shamanism while I was in my early teens."²¹

Claudio Naranjo (b. 1932), Chilean psychiatrist regarded as a pioneer of the Human Potential Movement is another innovator of the Enneagram of personality types. Naranjo sought to further his understanding of both psychology and spirituality, went to the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, a leading center for the Human Potential Movement. While at the Esalen Institute he encountered Fritz Perls (1893-1970), German-born psychiatrist and psychotherapist known as the father of Gestalt Therapy, which was an influential moment upon his theoretical outlook. Perls's impact upon the Human Potential Movement and modern psychology itself may be summarized best in his own words: "Freud took the first step...I accomplished the next step after Freud in the history of psychiatry".²² Naranjo apprenticed under Perls and was considered one of his three successors at the Esalen Institute. Naranjo initially learned about Ichazo in 1969, through various Chilean students who shared their experiences with him about Ichazo. Naranjo first entered into written correspondence with Ichazo and then decided to go to Chile to meet him in person. After Naranjo returned to California, he spread the word to others about Ichazo and the Arica training. Soon thereafter, Claudio Naranjo, along with John C. Lilly (1915-2001) physician and psychoanalyst were part of the first group of fifty-four Americans, many of whom were from the Esalen Institute and Big Sur, who traveled to Arica, Chile on July 1, 1970 to study with Ichazo. What took place between Ichazo and Naranjo we do not know and this will

likely continue to remain unknown, yet we do know that Naranjo decided to leave Ichazo after several months of studying with him and returned to the United States. We might add that by Ichazo’s own admission, he had no dispute with Naranjo. Upon Naranjo’s return to the San Francisco Bay Area he began teach the Enneagram of personality types or ego fixations that he had initially learned from Ichazo. Consequently Ichazo’s influence upon the Esalen Institute was legendary and many of the early disciples who studied under him in Chile returned to propagate the Arica training at Esalen, which was reflected in *The Esalen Catalog* Winter 1972.²³ Naranjo created SAT (“Seekers After Truth,” a phrase borrowed from Gurdjieff) Institute in September 1971, in Berkeley, California, to amalgamate his knowledge of modern psychological theories and the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) and correlating them with the Enneagram among the incorporation of an assortment of spiritual methods (i.e. Buddhist meditation, Gurdjieffian attention exercises, Sufi stories, etc.). It is important to note the SAT Institute predates by a decade, the flurry of interest in the Enneagram as it relates to personality types within the New Age movement, mainstream psychology and the popular culture.

CLAUDIO NARANJO, THE BREACH OF SECRECY AND THE ENNEAGRAM FOR MASS CONSUMPTION

Several figures that had trained directly with Naranjo or received instruction from those who studied under him are responsible for the mass dissemination of the Enneagram as most people understand it today.

The paradigm of the enneagram community is a little peculiar. It’s peculiar in that it’s mainly rooted in the work of one person, Oscar Ichazo, as interpreted by one other person, Claudio Naranjo. Most of the leading teachers of the enneagram were originally students of Naranjo’s. He taught his students, and they in turn taught their students. With each succeeding generation of enneagram teachers, the enneagram community grew in numbers.^{23b}

Some of the individuals exposed to Naranjo’s early teaching on the Enneagram who have gone on to become teachers themselves are: Helen Palmer, Kathy Riordan Speeth (b. 1937), Robert Ochs, A.H. Almaas (also known as A. Hameed Ali, b. 1944), Sandra Maitri, Peter O’Hanrahan and Reza Leah Landman. Naranjo’s avowal to complete secrecy regarding the teachings of the Enneagram of personality types was something that he felt

very strongly about, as we can see from his own statement on these matters:

Let me just say that the teaching I did in 1971/73 was restricted to two groups. One met during one and a half years, and the other for only six months, I believe. Both were subject to a considerable reserve. This reserve was made explicit through a signed commitment that nobody was to teach this, which I felt necessary because I was under a commitment of reserve with Ichazo at the time.²⁴

Apparently Robert Ochs, a Jesuit priest who attended the SAT Institute, took extensive notes during Naranjo's teaching on the Enneagram and taught it to other Jesuits at Loyola University in Chicago making them available to the Jesuit community at large. Those who had access to these teachings were: Patrick H. O'Leary, Paul Robb and Jerome Wagner. Before long these notes on the Enneagram teaching were spread throughout North America. In light of the popularity of the Enneagram within Catholic circles, it is significant to contextualize this interest vis-à-vis the events of the Vatican II Council that occurred during 1962-1965, which have relativized the Spirit and fundamentally compromised Western Christianity as these desacralizing forces also inevitably spread to the Protestant denominations leading to the pervasive secularism that exists in the present-day West.²⁵ In September 1984, the first book on the nine pointed symbol was published, entitled, *The Enneagram: A Journey of Self Discovery* by Maria Beesing, Robert J. Nogosek and Patrick H. O'Leary. Don Richard Riso encountered the early Enneagram material made available by Ochs in 1974, through one of Ochs initial students by the name of Tad Dunne, while Riso was in a Jesuit seminary in Toronto, Canada. In 1987, Riso published his first book on the Enneagram, *Personality Types*. Helen Palmer, psychic and self-proclaimed "Queen of the Enneagram"²⁶ published her first book on the nine pointed figure, *The Enneagram* in 1988. According to Palmer, she did not breach Naranjo's pact to secrecy as secrecy was not a requirement within the SAT group that she participated in: "I did attend nine sessions of a public enneagram class with no 'secrecy' requirement."²⁷ In fact Palmer has no qualms with having aided the popularization of the Enneagram as long as it has been in service of consciousness expansion: "I'm happy to be a popularizer, as long as what I've accomplished stands for popularization of the fact that type plays a part in accessing higher consciousness."²⁸ Shortly after Palmer's book hit the marketplace, Claudio Naranjo, published his *Ennea-Type Structures: Self-Analysis for the Seeker* in 1990.

From this juncture on, interest in the Enneagram has spread like wildfire. Naranjo laments the fact that his early teaching on the Enneagram were released and that his students did not honor his request to secrecy:

I want to only say parenthetically that I was not happy with the fact that the commitment to secrecy was not kept, that the enneagram came to the streets a little prematurely. I felt critical of people taking initiative in writing about information that had not been originated by them, and who were acquainted with only a fragment of a traditional body of knowledge that is considerably more complex.²⁹

Ichazo makes a thought-provoking and no less sobering assessment of the excitement surrounding the Enneagram of personality types which have reached the marketplace, “the types that have become popular are ‘mind games,’ with rather no foundation whatsoever”.³⁰ Gurdjieff makes a cautionary remark with regard to the popularization of the Enneagram and its limitations devoid esoteric knowledge to access its inner dimension: “The knowledge of the enneagram has for a very long time been preserved in secret and if it now is, so to speak, made available to all, it is only in an incomplete and theoretical form of which nobody could make any practical use without instruction from a man who knows.”³¹

OSCAR ICHAZO, CLAUDIO NARANJO AND THE FOURTH WAY TEACHING

It is important to note the connection between Ichazo and Naranjo and the teachings of Gurdjieff as both were very familiar with his Fourth Way system. Ichazo has confirmed that he came in contact with the ideas of Gurdjieff in the early 1950s, through Ouspensky’s book, *In Search of the Miraculous*. An early vehicle for the dissemination of Gurdjieff’s teaching and the Enneagram to the Spanish speaking world was through Rodney Collin (1909-1956), a British disciple of Ouspensky’s. Rodney and Janet Collin’s immigrated to Tlalpan, on the outskirts of Mexico City in 1948, accompanied by a number of Ouspensky followers and in 1952 published *The Theory of Celestial Influence (El Desarrollo de la Luz)*. Although it is suggested that Ichazo appropriated the teachings of the Enneagram from Gurdjieff without giving him due credit, Ichazo denies such claims. The Gurdjieff Foundation of California expressed this about Ichazo and the Arica Institute: “The Bolivian founder of Arica expounds his system, a popular psychological training which draws—usually without acknowledgment—on several of the Gurdjieff ideas, especially the symbol of the

enneagram (called here the ‘enneagon’).”³² Palmer links Ichazo’s “new tradition” with New Age thought due to his theoretical departure: “He [Ichazo] has moved the Enneagram from a Sufi context, from a Christian esoteric context, from the Gurdjieff context, and couched his ‘new discovery’ in an eclectic, new age spiritual growth context.”³³ Others suggest, “the enneagram is a teaching device used by the Sufi school and developed by Ichazo.”³⁴

Although Ichazo admits to have read all of Gurdjieff’s books and those of his disciples, he nevertheless responds to the accusation of having borrowed from his work and not giving him his due credit: “In synthesis, though I have gone through all of Gurdjieff’s material, as well as all the important literature about him, I have never come to an ‘idea’ that I can call the unique apport [a term indicating the paranormal transference or appearance of an object] of Mr. Gurdjieff.”³⁵ Ichazo alludes to the syncretic underpinnings of the Arica Institute: “Arica is not as much my invention as it is a product of our times. The knowledge I have contributed to the school came to me from many sources I encountered in my peculiar quest.”³⁶ Although Ichazo has studied the numerous religious and mystical teachings of the world and warns against syncretism (the indiscriminant mixing of heterogeneous ideas in an attempt to fashion a synthesis), it is not clear if Ichazo has a traditional spiritual affiliation or if he offers a more nuanced version of the one and the same piecemeal approaches of the New Age movement:

You cannot make a cocktail of traditions. That is totally false. I was not doing that at all. At any time I would teach one distinct path, just that path without including any elements of a different path. Or more clearly, suppose: If we were doing some Sufi exercise we would be working that Sufi exercise exclusively, not mixing Sufism with yoga, or yoga with Zen, etc. We worked them as separate units and never really mixed them. We were studying these traditions, just as you can study geography, mathematics, or history, and yet you don’t confuse them: each is a different science with a different method.³⁷

Ichazo has gone as far as saying: “Since I am proposing a completely new method, I am certainly correct when I say ‘I am the root of a new tradition.’”³⁸ According to Naranjo, “he [Ichazo] asserts that he received the enneagram of character-fixations by direct inspiration.”³⁹ What was the source of this “inspiration”? Ichazo claims to have received his instruction from the Metatron of the Kabbalah, the prince of the archangels and from the mysterious “Green Qu’Tub” (likely referring to Khidr mean-

ing “the Green One” within the Islamic tradition), both entities are in theory available to all Aricans. “[H]e may receive instructions from the higher entities such as Metatron, the prince of the archangels, who has given instructions to Ichazo.”⁴⁰ And, “The interior master of all Aricans is called the Green Qu’Tub. He may or may not make himself known to individual Aricans, depending on the stage of development of the student.”⁴¹ Ichazo emphasizes that the Enneagram came to him in a vision and its development into a system is his alone:

They came to me, 108 in all, as in a vision, showing their internal relations with complete clarity, in 1954 in Santiago, Chile. Not only am I the holder of the beginning of this tradition, but also, as can be absolutely and concretely proven, the 108 enneagons and the entire system in all its terms have been developed by me, only and exclusively, and I am more than ready to contest it publicly.⁴²

Naranjo informs us that he first learned about the Enneagram through the Fourth Way teaching in his early youth, as he explains: “I was first acquainted with the enneagram by reading Ouspensky’s *In Search of the Miraculous* when I was in my late teens.”⁴³ It was this early exposure to the Fourth Way teaching of Gurdjieff that led Naranjo to study with Ichazo. “[M]y main interest in learning from Oscar Ichazo was a conviction that he was a link to the Sarmouni—the school behind Gurdjieff.”⁴⁴ Naranjo has stated that Ichazo on several occasions alluded to his affiliation with the Sarmouni or the “School of the Bees,” the same ancient source that Gurdjieff obtained certain Sufi teachings and this is what drew Naranjo to Ichazo: “As we worked with Oscar [Ichazo], I had no doubt about regarding him as a link with that tradition which had been the main element in Gurdjieff’s own background.”⁴⁵ Yet Ichazo later appears to have denounced Gurdjieff’s influence upon the formation of the Arica system, as Naranjo expresses, “Originally Oscar Ichazo claimed that the enneagram was passed on to him orally by the Sarmouni, a Sufi brotherhood. In a recent interview, he said that he had never met a single Sufi who knew about the enneagram.”⁴⁶ We need to take heed with Moore’s intimation regarding Gurdjieff’s encounter with the Sarmouni: “Gurdjieff’s provocative claim to have found and entered ‘the chief Sarmoun Monastery’ is in effect a litmus test, differentiating literal minds from those preferring allegory.”⁴⁷

Curiously, while Naranjo initially gave credit to Ichazo’s psychological typology of the Enneagram, per Naranjo’s own admission, “Oscar Ichazo, through whom I first became acquainted with the ‘enneagrams of

personality’ during a series of lectures dictated [by Ichazo] at the Instituto de Psicología Aplicada (Santiago) in 1969, under the sponsorship of the Chilean Psychological Association”.⁴⁸ Yet in 2010, he recanted this in two separate interviews, verifying that he did not in fact learn ennea-types from Ichazo. Naranjo stated that he intentionally gave authorship to Ichazo who was more famous than he, in order to draw more individuals to the Enneagram and therefore establish a correlation between the ancient Sufi origins of the Enneagram brought to the modern West through Gurdjieff and Ichazo leading to him. Palmer gives credit to Ichazo by way of the Fourth Way teachings: “The correct placement of the emotional passions was produced by Oscar Ichazo, and with that deceptively simple arrangement of what Gurdjieff called Chief Feature, the Enneagram code became available to us.”⁴⁹

Naranjo stated that under his tutelage with Ichazo, Ichazo spoke minimally about the Enneagram and said nothing about the specific ennea-types as he later developed. “He didn’t talk about the enneagrams of personality more than two hours during our year with him.”⁵⁰ Incidentally, Naranjo credits E.J. Gold (b. 1941), who was also influenced by Gurdjieff in coining the term “ennea-type”. Naranjo then expressed that he obtained his ideas about the psychological types of the Enneagram through “automatic writing” or “psychography” and then verified them through observation.⁵¹ We must not neglect the fact that Naranjo himself never completed his tutelage with Ichazo before taking on students himself, “Claudio [Naranjo] broke with Oscar [Ichazo] very early on, before completing Oscar’s training. Claudio took the enneagram with him, thus starting a tradition within the enneagram community.”⁵²

Naranjo confers the significance of his instruction under Ichazo in understanding personality types and the structure of the personality: “To this awakening of a ‘clinical eye’ I owe everything that I was able to learn about personality types and personality in general from then on, and for the intellectual experience of an increasing coalescence of what information on the subject I acquired.”⁵³ Palmer emphasizes what she considers Ichazo’s chief contribution to the Enneagram of personality types: “Most important, Ichazo had placed the types correctly on the nine-pointed star”.⁵⁴ Naranjo dually credits the impact of Gurdjieff’s introduction of the Enneagram: “I could say that the enneagram of the Sarmouni acted as a magnet in my mind to bring together the pieces of psychological lore that, until then, were separate, an organizing catalytic factor causing the relative chaos of the information to come into a more precise pattern.”⁵⁵ Naranjo was going to initially name his first book on the Enneagram by way of illustrating his indebtedness to the Sarmouni in its title: *Character Structure and Psycho-*

dynamics in the Light of the Enneagram of the Sarmouni, yet he later renamed it.⁵⁶

An additionally important influence upon Naranjo’s outlook is the influence of Idries Shah (1924-1996), as Naranjo writes: “I should interpolate here for the sake of context that, as many who were deeply affected by the Gurdjieff heritage, I had been disappointed in the extent to which Gurdjieff’s school entailed a living lineage. I had turned in my search towards Sufism and had become part of a group under the guidance of Idries Shah”.⁵⁷ Although Shah only references the Enneagram to our knowledge solely in one book,⁵⁸ he was a key source for the popularization of Sufism in the West which has filtered into modern psychology.⁵⁹ However, it has been considerably demonstrated that Shah’s brand of Sufism is highly distorted and does not reflect the authenticity of traditional Islamic spirituality.⁶⁰ We may briefly note that shortly after Gurdjieff’s death, Idries Shah came onto the scene. Bennett, pupil of both Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, was still determinedly seeking for a guide after Gurdjieff’s passing. When Bennett learned that Idries Shah had identified himself as the spiritual Pole or *Qutb* of this age, and that he had claimed to be a representative of the “Guardians of the Tradition” which Bennett assumed to be what Gurdjieff had called “The Inner Circle of Humanity” stemming from the Khwajagan of Central Asia where the Naqshbandi Sufi order is said to originate, Bennett fell under his influence. Shah made much effort to attract Gurdjieff’s disciples and took questionable measures to do so. For example, he is reported to have had disciples’ pen books under pseudonyms fabricating the claim that he was an authentic representative of the Sarmoung Brotherhood. Some have suggested that Shah himself authored these texts.⁶¹ Much of Shah’s work has entered both the Human Potential Movement and the New Age Movement, including modern psychology most notably within the humanistic and transpersonal orientations and remains a central introductory source on Sufism for seekers in the West.

Riso insists that the Enneagram of personality types is a contemporary innovation and the credit needs to go to Ichazo and Naranjo and not to the ancient origins of the Enneagram. He has called those within the enneagram community to stop “Romancing the Enneagram,”⁶² however this is a change in his initial position reflected in an earlier publication: “I not only have much to learn but also much for which to give thanks, especially to those ancient masters who have handed down to us the profound wisdom of the Enneagram.”⁶³ Kathleen Riordan Speeth, who was raised in the *milieu* of Gurdjieff (including A.R. Orage, 1873-1934) and the Fourth Way teachings as her parents were disciples of Gurdjieff’s, Speeth fixedly asserted that the origins of the nine pointed figure derived from Islamic eso-

terism: “The central symbol of the Gurdjieff work, the enneagram, is almost certainly of Sufi origin—an indication of the importance of these teachings in the system Gurdjieff developed.”⁶⁴ Palmer avows that the origins of the Enneagram are to be found within the mystical dimensions of Islam and dedicated her first book on the Enneagram to Lord Pentland (Henry John Sinclair, 1907-1984), a prominent disciple of Ouspensky and Gurdjieff who became the President of the Gurdjieff Foundation in both New York and California: “The Enneagram is an ancient Sufi teaching”.⁶⁵ Ichazo nevertheless negates the assertion of the Sufi origins of the Enneagram: “I know Sufism extensively—I’ve practiced traditional *zhikr*, prayer, meditation—and I know realized Sufi sheiks. It is not part of their theoretical framework. They couldn’t care less about the Enneagon.”⁶⁶ A.H. Almaas who took part in the early SAT group under Naranjo, presents the connection between—Gurdjieff, Ichazo and Naranjo—in a summary fashion which brings light to the contemporary understanding of the Enneagram:

The nine-pointed symbol of the Enneagram first made a significant appearance in the modern West through the teachings of G.I. Gurdjieff, an Armenian mystic, around the turn of the century. Gurdjieff appears to have learned it from a secret school in the Middle East, a school steeped in a spiritual tradition that is at least two thousand years old. He did not, as far as we know, teach the Enneagram of personality fixation, which is currently the most widely known Enneagram. This Enneagram, which has become popular in recent years, came mostly from Claudio Naranjo, a Chilean psychiatrist and teacher, who learned it from Oscar Ichazo, a South American spiritual teacher. It is not clear which parts of this Enneagram teaching originated with Ichazo and which were added to or elaborated upon by Naranjo in the context of his extensive knowledge of depth psychology. Naranjo, from whom we learned the body of knowledge associated with the Enneagram, related it to the Middle Eastern school with which Gurdjieff was associated, but clearly stated that he received the basic knowledge of the Enneagram from Oscar Ichazo.⁶⁷

We will defer to the Naranjo’s assessment of the current state of the “enneagram community” of which he was instrumental in launching: “I see the movement as pervaded by a combination of greed and arrogance and by a great disrespect toward the sources of the knowledge”.⁶⁸ We again cite Naranjo, “I will finish by saying that I have been ambivalent about the enneagram movement that I have unwittingly fathered...looking in retro-

spect, we may say what Oscar [Ichazo] used to say concerning the excitement of the enneagram movement (and this was one of his most favorite slogans): ‘the devil doesn’t know for whom he works.’”⁶⁹

THE ORIGINS OF THE ENNEAGRAM AND ISLAMIC ESOTERISM

Although the Enneagram is a universal symbol and has been traced to several different origins, a primary source is found within Islamic esoterism. An imperative encounter that illumines a traditional source the Enneagram took place between Gurdjieff and Shaykh Abd Allah al-Faiz ad-Daghestani (1891-1973), who was raised and trained by his maternal uncle, Shaykh Sharafuddin ad-Daghestani (1875-1936) of the Naqshbandi Sufi order. It is this encounter along with other key Sufi works that not only contextualize the Enneagram or rather the Presence of God (*wajh Allah*) as it is traditionally known within Sufism (*tasawwuf*) but unveils its spiritual dimension. J.G. Bennett, Gurdjieff’s disciple, also made the acquaintance with Shaykh Abd Allah al-Faiz ad-Daghestani.⁷⁰ We cite some of this encounter in its length, in order to allow readers to see that the Enneagram or the *wajh Allah* is a spiritual symbol connected to a Divine revelation.

As soon as they met, Shaykh Abd Allah said, ‘You are interested in the knowledge of the Nine Points. We can speak on it in the morning after the dawn prayer [*Fajr*]. Now you eat something and rest.’ At the time of the dawn prayer [*Fajr*], Shaykh Abd Allah called Gurdjieff to come and pray with him. As soon as the prayer finished, the shaykh began to recite *Surah YaSin* from the Holy Quran. As he finished reading, Gurdjieff approached him and asked if he could speak of what he had just experienced. Gurdjieff said:

‘As soon as you finished the prayer and began to recite, I saw you come to me and take my hand. We were transported to a beautiful rose garden. You told me that this garden is your garden and these roses are your disciples, each with his own color and perfume. You directed me to one particular red rose and said, “That one is yours. Go smell it.” As I did, I saw the rose open and I disappeared within it and became the rose. I entered its roots, and they led me to your presence. I found myself entering into your heart and becoming a part of you.

‘Through your spiritual power I was able to ascend to the knowledge of the power of the Nine Points. Then a voice, addressing me as Abd an-Nur, said, “This light and knowledge have been granted to you from the Divine Presence of God to bring peace to your heart. However, you must not use the power

of this knowledge.” The voice bid me farewell with the salutation of peace and the vision ended as you were finishing the recitation from the Quran.’

Shaykh Abd Allah replied: ‘*Surah YaSin* was called “the Heart of the Quran” by the Holy Prophet and the knowledge of these Nine Points was opened to you through it. The vision was by the blessings of the verse, “*Peace! A World (of salutation) from a Lord Most Merciful.*” (36:58)

‘Each of the Nine Points is represented by one of nine saints who are at the highest level in the Divine Presence. They are the keys to untold powers within the human being, **but there is no permission to use these keys. This is a secret that, in general, will not be opened until the Last Days when the Mahdi appears and Jesus returns.**’⁷¹

It is through Laleh Bakhtiar’s (b. 1938) ground-breaking research grounded in spiritual hermeneutics (*ta’wil*) consisting of a three volume work on the Enneagram entitled *God’s Will Be Done*⁷² that has resuscitated and recontextualized the traditional origins of the Enneagram within Islamic spirituality. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933), one of the most important and foremost scholars of Islamic, Religious and Comparative Studies in the world today, writes the following regarding Bakhtiar’s contribution in reviving the traditional Enneagram:

Dr. Bakhtiar is to be congratulated in clarifying an aspect of Islamic spirituality as imbedded in spiritual chivalry and many basic metaphysical and cosmological doctrines of Islamic esotericism, as well as in bringing out the full meaning and spiritual import of the Enneagram. Her work, therefore, possesses not only a scholarly significance but also a practical one for those who are making practical use of the Enneagram and who are in quest of means to achieve moral and psychological healing. The book also conveys the very significant message that traditional techniques, doctrines and symbols, while always possessing an innate value which issues from their very nature grounded in the Truth, reveal their full meaning and efficacy only within a living spiritual universe although they can also be transmitted from one such universe to another.⁷³

Bakhtiar’s efforts have also brought to light the integral psychology found within the Enneagram symbol, which corresponds to the traditional psychology found within each of the Divinely revealed traditions. Although the Enneagram contains a sacred psychology, it is fundamentally a method

of spiritual transformation. It is the confusion of levels, primarily the muddling of the psychological domain with the spiritual domain that contemporary Enneagram proponents typically overlook or misunderstand. To solely translate the Enneagram into a psychological system or a codification of personality types, not only undermines this sacred symbol but undermines its spiritual dimension. Limiting the Enneagram to the psychological level, disavows its psychological efficacy as every integral psychology is attached to a spiritual tradition, if this were not so, it would not be a psychology in its true sense. The human psyche is subordinate to what is higher than itself and this for the most part was undermined by the foundations of modern psychology and psychiatry that has cut itself off from the sacred with the events that transpired through the so-called Age of the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries. A predominant danger to which personality type theory all too easily lends itself to is *psychologism* the reduction of the Spirit to psychological criterion. This reductionism in many ways defines the contemporary spiritual scene and is especially the case with New Age thought, yet is no less also visible within modern psychology.

THE PSYCHOLOGIZATION OF THE ENNEAGRAM

The process by which esoteric or spiritual knowledge is translated and moreover lowered to psychological criterion indicates the secular mentality that dominates our age. With this said, one can see as there are abundant examples of how traditional symbols such as the Enneagram can be usurped within the fold of a materialistic psychology. Why is it important to unearth one's particular ennea-type? Palmer presents two reasons for this, which in and of themselves are noble goals given the militantly secular era: "The reason for discovering your own type is so you can build a working relationship with yourself."⁷⁴ And, "The second reason to study type is so you can understand other people as they are to themselves, rather than as you see them from your own point of view."⁷⁵ Focusing on ones "typology" or "fixation" is a recent phenomenon and bears no resemblance to the traditional use of the Enneagram. A core problem with the contemporary interpretation of Enneagram personality types is that it all too easily lends itself to view all individuals through the ennea-type lens, limiting them to a static personality type, which is really the false identification with the empirical ego and not an individual's true identity. This kind of psychologism or "typism" is endemic to the Enneagram of personality types and is a testimony to its functioning primarily on a psychological level, obscuring what is higher:

The Enneagram authors have made the grave mistake of making this theory into a typology of nine “personality types” as tools for ego aggrandizement, instead of a method of ego-reduction and final transcendence of the lower ego that, in fact, is like a sickness that has to be cured and transformed, in order to become completely developed human beings in a state of self-liberation.⁷⁶

Key to understanding the psychological interpretation of the spiritual traditions is found in the following statement by American psychologist Robert E. Ornstein (b. 1942), disciple and key representative of Idries Shah: “As the esoteric disciplines of other cultures become accessible to the [modern] West, they emerge as psychologies.”⁷⁷ Ichazo also frames the Arica system in an analogous psychological fashion to appeal to the contemporary mindset, “Protoanalysis follows the same path as the real ancient spirituality, and it is a modern presentation...of all human potentialities in order to become actualized.”⁷⁸ Palmer also echoes this process: “The [Enneagram of personality types] system was being developed as an esoteric psychological tool.”⁷⁹ We might recall a similar statement made by Chögyam Trungpa (1939-1987), an early teacher of Vajrayāna or Tibetan Buddhism in the West, who said: “Buddhism will come to the West as a psychology.”⁸⁰

While Sufi psychology or “science of the soul”, like Buddhist psychology, has increased in its popularity, both have had attempts to distil them from their exoteric traditions. In regard to Sufism this is not only unfortunate, but a distortion of its central message which cannot be cut off from Islam as all Sufi orders are linked through an unbroken “chain” (*sil-silah*) back to the Prophet himself. Within Buddhism, some of the highest level teachings and or practices are often offered to Western audiences with little or no commitment or even assessment of individual qualification. Analogously the appeal to co-opt Sufism or Buddhism or any of the divinely revealed traditions and solely acknowledge them as a form of modern psychology is erroneous. This process can be very slippery and one needs to read between the lines to perceive the more nuanced versions of this rooted psychologism: “My intention is not to ‘reduce’ totally the phenomena of the esoteric disciplines to psychological terms, but simply to begin the process of considering these aspects of the traditions which fall within the realm of a modern psychological analysis.”⁸¹ And what about that which does not lend itself to empirical verification through the five senses? The human psyche and Spirit itself lie outside the empirical order. Does this mean that the spiritual traditions that contain a less recognizable

psychological dimension will be excluded according to the likes of modern psychology? There are many unfortunate implications underlying this logic and how it then proceeds to understand the subtle realm of the human psyche and what is beyond it.

While contemporary psychology as an autonomous science separate from religion and philosophy began with the emergence of modernism which occurred through the Enlightenment, it is erroneous to presuppose that the sapiential traditions did not have an implicit, if not an explicit, integral psychology within themselves, even if they did not name themselves “psychology”. In the premodern world the human psyche was always and everywhere viewed through the lens of spirituality, starkly contrasting today’s materialistic science that no longer acknowledges the reality of the human soul, now exchanged for a more scientifically acceptable term “mind” speaks to the secular outlook that views psychology or the “science of the soul” through a truncated and inverted viewpoint.

The notion that modern psychology offers something “new” or “superior” than the psychology of the traditions, has to do with the incomprehension as to what it means to be human in its most complete sense and this is a direct reflection of the eclipse of authentic spirituality in the contemporary world. Palmer personifies the thought process that mirrors what has been termed the “psychological impostor,”⁸² a seduction that misunderstands the fullness of spirituality and its corresponding integral psychology which is evident within the “enneagram community”:

Gurdjieff was a contemporary of Freud’s; there was no psychology then, except in the minds of a very few physicians in Europe. I hardly think he could have had any possibility of organizing the material in the way that is now possible in our generation, with all of its public availability of psychological understanding. There was no psychology at that time, so the most that could be done was to recognize in some clumsy fashion the chief feature and bring it to a student’s attention.⁸³

The ancient maxim of “Know thyself” was not born with Freud or modern psychology for that matter, but is attributed to the timeless truths that exist everywhere. Rather than approaching the human psyche through the eye of modern science, we would be better off to pay close attention to the sacred science underlying the statement of Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173): “If the mind would fain ascend to the height of science, let its first and principal study be to know itself.”⁸⁴ Although each spiritual tradition possesses a corresponding psychology they are integral so long as they are contextualized within the given spiritual tradition.

It is all too often forgotten by contemporaries that the human psyche or soul is subservient to the Spirit and this is why many are duped by New Age views suggesting that that they are synonymous with each other. The following provides an example of leveling a spiritual symbol to a psychological one: “The [Enneagram of personality types] teaching can help us to recognize our own type and how to cope with our issues, understand our work associates, lovers, friends, and to appreciate the predisposition that each type has for higher human capacities such as empathy, omniscience, and love.”⁸⁵

Riso and Hudson also stress the commonalities between the Enneagram and modern psychology: “The Enneagram’s remarkable properties will become even more evident when we compare it with the typologies of Karen Horney, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and the pathological categories employed in psychiatry.... [W]e hope to indicate that the Enneagram is...consistent with modern psychological systems”.^{85b}

The tripartite structure of the human microcosm, found within all of the sapiential traditions consists of Spirit/Intellect, soul and body. We must be therefore cautious when statements are made emphasizing the importance of psychological inquiry over spiritual practice, for it is spiritual practice that assists in the integration of the human psyche into its Supreme Identity and not the other way around: “The way we get to our essential nature is not primarily through spiritual exercises but through psychological work to penetrate parts of the personality that are connected to underling essential aspects of ourselves. Psychological inquiry leads to spiritual realization. Meditation supports this inquiry and sharpens it, but the psychological work is inseparable from the spiritual practice.”⁸⁶

While many of the contemporary approaches appear to embrace the psychology found at heart of all spiritualities, they operate on several false assumptions, which when viewed more rigorously from the perspective of the perennial philosophy are seen to be antagonistic in essence to the very mystical dimension that they seek to align themselves with. First off, the inner dimension or esoterism cannot exist without the outer dimension or exoterism; to only acknowledge esoterism is erroneous and that is precisely what New Age pseudo-spirituality seeks to do—to strip religion of religion—so that it can then declare as true whatever it wishes. Secondly, to say that esoterism presents itself as a spectrum of “psychologies” is very misleading as well because spirituality is higher than the psychological domain and to suggest that it is really psychology as such is the same mistake that C.G. Jung (1875-1961), the Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist

made by reducing spirituality to psychology, which is the definition of psychologism. Thirdly, the general paradigm for the so-called “traditional esoteric psychologies”⁸⁷ is viewed through the lens of New Age spirituality which is neither “traditional” nor “esoteric”, and is thus an attempt to postulate a spiritualized modern psychology in a way that is antagonistic to its very premise.

That many within humanistic and transpersonal psychology attributes valid Sufism to the controversial figure Idries Shah is definitely problematical; again while Shah popularized Sufism in the West, he is not a valid source of traditional Sufism. We can see here how Shah accommodates his ideas to the secular mindset rather than that of tradition; no matter how subtle his approach may at first appear the end result is always the same: the undermining of tradition, which is a hallmark of New Age spirituality: “We may call Sufi ideas ‘a psychology’, not because this term adequately describes Sufism, but because nowadays ‘wisdom’ is not a popular word.”⁸⁸ Shah himself quotes an unnamed “Sufi” to the effect that Sufism began as psychology, later became associated with religion, and has now become psychology again. “So, if you are looking for spirituality which requires such insights [psychological], you have to look at the ‘reduction’ by the great classical Sufi masters, not by me, for I am no innovator in this respect. If, too, you imagine that the Sufis are not to be regarded as ‘spiritual’ because of their insistence on psychology...you are out of luck again...”⁸⁹ In answer to a final interview question posed to Shah: “For the sake of humanity, what would you like to see happen?”, he radically deviates from that of traditional Sufism or any integral spiritual tradition by throwing the Saints and Sages of all times and places under the bus, leaving any evaluation of them to the whims of modern psychology:

What I really want, in case anybody is listening, is for the products of the last 50 years of psychological research to be studied by the public, by everybody, so that the findings become part of their way of thinking. At the moment, people have adopted only a few. They talk glibly about making Freudian slips and they have accepted the idea of inferiority complexes. But they have this great body of psychological information and refuse to use it.⁹⁰

THE RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE DIMENSIONS OF PERSONALITY

Modern psychology is also confused as to what Personality is. Due to modern psychology’s difficulties in discerning levels of Reality, it tends

to view the relative personality or empirical ego as a definitive human identity, rarely acknowledging the ultimate nature of Personality *in divinis*. These can be summarized as follows: the confusion of the Absolute with the relative, the Vertical with the horizontal, the Spirit with the psychic, the Intellect with reason, the Self with ego and the Personality with individuality. The integral psychology informed by the perennial philosophy recognizes two forms of human identity, one relative and one Absolute without blurring or confusing these two distinct dimensions. Most if not all approaches to the contemporary understanding of the Enneagram delineate the distinction between personality and Essence. In singling out the relative dimension of personality the transcendent dimension of Personality is excluded. In solely addressing the Absolute dimension of Essence the relative dimension of an individual essence is excluded. Although this might appear as an unnecessary semantic nitpicking, the precise meaning of these terms as they are understood in their traditional context is of utmost importance. Modern psychology is in many ways confined to the relative, as the notion of identity is caught in the psychic realm: “[I]dentity comes about through the projection of an unconscious association by analogy with the object.”⁹¹ In contrast, we recall the following which speaks to the fullness of human identity: “‘Inwardly’ every religion is the doctrine of the one Self and its earthly manifestation, as also as the way leading to the abolition of the false self, or the way of the mysterious reintegration of our ‘personality’ in the celestial Prototype”.⁹²

There cannot be an effective *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) without taking the relative and Absolute criteria of human identity into consideration, and that is why the DSM, now in its fifth edition published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), remains as a sort of caricature of itself. The psychological interpretation of the Enneagram, like the DSM, is a categorical classification that divides personality characteristics into types consisting of defining features. As what is higher than the human psyche can alone establish integral individuality, it may not be surprising that the DSM concerns itself with human pathology, which is apparent in the ensuing: “*Personality traits* are enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts. Only when personality traits are inflexible and maladaptive and cause significant functional impairment or subjective distress do they constitute Personality Disorders.”⁹³

In an analogous way, the Enneagram has come to occupy a similar function as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) created by Katharine Cook Briggs (1875-1968) and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers (1897-

1980). It was C.G. Jung who was the key catalyst for the MBTI, as Katharine Cook Briggs came across Jung's book *Psychological Types* in 1923 when it was published into the English language. She entered into written correspondence with Jung and met with him personally when he came to the United States. Those who use the MBTI overlook the fact that Jung's contribution to psychology, while appearing to be more inclusive than his master Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), whom he parted ways took the reductionistic trajectory of Freud to a new acme by psychologizing religion itself. This misreading of Jung's work within modern psychology and spirituality endures into the present: "The major exception was Jung: his idea of the *collective unconscious* was an opening into the spiritual dimensions of our existence."⁹⁴ Well intended individuals also hold this onto this problematic belief regarding Jung: "Carl Jung gave us a model of psychological transformation that is based upon the Western psyche."⁹⁵ We recall a most insightful reflection on the

[A] so-called 'collective consciousness,' existing in some way in or below the psychism of all human individuals, to which he [C.G. Jung] believed he could attribute the origin both of symbols themselves and of their pathological parodies indiscriminately. It goes without saying that this term 'unconscious' is altogether inappropriate, and that what it serves to designate, to the degree that it can be said to have any reality, comes from what psychologist call more commonly the 'subconscious,' that is, the totality of the inferior prolongations of consciousness.⁹⁶

One must question the utility of a psychological theory that begins and ends with a truncated outlook on what the human psyche and human individual is.

If Jung, one of the central architects of transpersonal psychology, who also influenced humanistic psychology including perhaps the whole of modern psychology, mistook and confused the domain of the Self—the nexus of the human individual—it then raises vital questions to the legitimacy of fourth "force" psychology. "I have chosen the term 'self' to designate the totality of man, the sum total of his conscious and unconscious contents. I have chosen this term in accordance with Eastern philosophy".⁹⁷ Jung makes a decisive error in conflating the Self with the ego: "[T]he self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man."⁹⁸ And we cannot underestimate the import of the Self for—"the 'Self' represents one of the profoundest, potentially most integrative, insights that modern psychology has so far achieved."⁹⁹ However, the "Self" which modern psychology

speaks of is not the Self or Ātmā that is known in the Hindu *dharma*. And yet when looked at in a historical context this deviation is not a recent error, but a long and complex process that has taken place since the Renaissance and the Enlightenment that has led up to the development of modern science and its byproduct modern psychology.

In light of the Enneagram of personality types and its system of codifying these traits, we might present a few of Jung’s comments and reflections on the import of developing the personality, the “ultimate aim and strongest desire of all mankind is to develop that fullness of life which is called personality.”¹⁰⁰ While this remains rather vague, Jung reveals in more detail what he means by his notion of personality in the following:

The achievement of personality means nothing less than the optimum development of the whole individual human being.... Personality is the supreme realization of the innate idiosyncrasy of a living being. It is an act of high courage flung in the face of life, the absolute affirmation of all that constitutes the individual, the most successful adaptation to the universal conditions of existence coupled with greatest possible freedom for self-domination.¹⁰¹

And then Jung paradoxically reframes this process and suggests that it is an impossible feat: “Personality, as the complete realization of our whole being, is an unattainable ideal.”¹⁰² In emphasizing the diversity of human individuals, which all sapiential traditions unanimously acknowledge and hold to be true, Jung appears to lose sight of Unity in diversity repudiating the vertical or transcendent dimension of human identity:

[T]hrough the study of all sorts of human types, I came to the conclusion that there must be as many different ways of viewing the world. The aspect of the world is not one, it is many—at least 16, and you can just as well say 360. You can increase the number of principles, but I found the most simple way is the way I told you, the division by four, the simple and natural division of a circle.¹⁰³

In reviewing these points we can see the general leveling of Spirit to accommodate a psychological or horizontal point of view on human identity. To what extent Jung’s work has influenced the Enneagram of personality types we do not know; nonetheless there is a shared psychological outlook between the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Enneagram of personality types.

ZERO AS THE SUPREME IDENTITY

It is regrettable that New Age proponents and others within contemporary spiritual and psychological circles exclusively endeavor to excavate their own Enneagram “type,” rather than realize that their personality at any moment could be any one of its nine “numbers.” The quest of the Enneagram is to become a “Zero,” and this occurs when the empirical ego or false personality dissolves into the Supreme Identity. It is spiritual practice as prescribed via a Divinely revealed tradition that liberates the Enneagram from the throes of the psychological domain. The higher in fact includes the lower and this is why only what transcends the human psyche can situate it in its rightful place. Bakhtiar informs readers that according to Sufism, the quintessence of the traditional Enneagram is the goal of becoming a Zero. The following is taken from a conversation between Bakhtiar and a revered representative of the Naqshbandi Sufi order: “One day Shaykh Hisham [b. 1945] said that he would tell me a secret about the Sufi Enneagram: The zero point in the center symbolizes the egoless person.”¹⁰⁴ This is an important key to the mystery surrounding the traditional application of the Enneagram for it reveals that the traditional Enneagram is working on a transpersonal level and not trapped in the *cul-du-sac* of the empirical ego. For this reason we are in need of integral metaphysics and not what modern psychology haphazardly identifies metaphysics with: “‘Metaphysical’ has for us the psychological connotation ‘unconscious.’”¹⁰⁵ Integral metaphysics informs us through gnosis or transcendent knowledge of the deeper implication of Zero: “[P]rimordial unity is nothing other than Zero affirmed”¹⁰⁶ or “Non-Being is metaphysical Zero”.¹⁰⁷ The quest of the human journey is to reintegrate into our primordial nature (*fitrah*), the “image of God” (*imago Dei*), Buddha-nature (*Buddha-dhātu*) or the Self (*Ātmā*), our true identity *in divinis* and this is what Zero denotes. As conveyed in the *Tao Te Ching* (XIX), “Realize thy Simple Self. Embrace thy Original Nature.”¹⁰⁸

It is the Zero at the center of the Enneagram that is most sought-after as it reconciles all polarities, transcending the horizontal domain of the psychological world: “At the central point, all oppositions inherent in more external points of view are transcended; all oppositions have disappeared and are resolved in a perfect equilibrium.”¹⁰⁹ Zero thus correlates to Being and Non-Being, in so far as Non-Being contains Being within itself:

If we...define Being in the universal sense as the principle of manifestation, and at the same time as comprising in itself the

totality of all the possibilities of manifestation, we must say that Being is not infinite because it does not coincide with total Possibility; and all the more so because Being, as the principle of manifestation, although it does indeed comprise all the possibilities of manifestation, does so only insofar as they are actually manifested. Outside of Being, therefore, are all the rest, that is all the possibilities of non-manifestation, as well as the possibilities of manifestation themselves insofar as they are in the unmanifested state; and included among these is Being itself, which cannot belong to manifestation since it is the principle thereof, and in consequence is itself unmanifested. For want of any other term, we are obliged to designate all that is thus outside and beyond Being as ‘Non-Being’, but for us this negative term is in no way a synonym for ‘nothingness’¹¹⁰

ENNEAGRAM AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Bakhtiar informs us that in order to utilize the Enneagram in its traditional context it requires *futuwwah* or spiritual chivalry indicating continuous spiritual warfare upon the false identification with egoism. The prophet Muhammad refers to two different types of *jihad* or “holy war”. The one more commonly known yet no less misunderstood and abused is that of the “lesser holy war” (*al-jihād al-asghar*) which seeks to protect the lovers of God through social or military efforts. The second is the “greater holy war” (*al-jihād al-akbar*) which was considered to be the highest form of spiritual warfare, one that takes place on the battlefield of the seeker’s heart. The following illustrates the mystical dimension of warfare and its imperative to traveling the spiritual path:

During the return march to Medina after the victories of Mecca and Hunayn the Prophet said to some of his Companions: ‘We have returned from the Lesser Holy War to the Greater Holy War.’ And when one of them asked: ‘What is the Greater Holy War, O Messenger of God?’ he answered: ‘The war against the soul.’ The soul of fallen man is divided against itself. Of its lowest aspect the Koran says: *Verily the soul commandeth unto evil*. The better part of it, that is the conscience, is named the *ever-upbraiding soul*; and it is this which wages the Greater Holy War, with the help of the Spirit, against the lower soul.¹¹¹

Spiritual warfare can be found throughout the plenary traditions and is not limited to Islam. It is interesting to note that His Holiness the 14th Dali Lama of Tibet (b. 1935) stated in an “Interfaith Summit on Hap-

piness: Understanding and Promoting Happiness in Today’s Society” held on October 17th - 18th, 2010 at Emory University that: “[T]he whole Buddhist practice is but the practice of *Jihād*.” Gautama Buddha (563-483) himself confirms the following in the *Dhammapada* (103): “One may conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, yet he is the best of conquerors who conquers himself.”¹¹² Within Christianity it may be exemplified with: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).¹¹³ It is significant that since the earliest times spiritual warfare has been made use of as can be seen within the Shamanic or primordial religion of the First Peoples:

[T]he sun dancer and the Sun Dance itself will bless all of the tribe and all creation through the inner, spiritual warfare. . . . The warrior fights an enemy who is on the outside; the sun dancer wages a war on an enemy within himself. Each of us must fight a continuing battle to keep to the spiritual values that represent our traditional heritage. If we fail to be continually alert in our prayers and our attitudes and to use good sense in all that we do, then we will fail in our interior war. In olden days, this interior warfare had the support of the whole tribe, and our life itself helped to guide us in our personal struggle. Nowadays, we must follow the Sun Dance way all the more carefully, because it contains the key to our sacred warfare.¹¹⁴

A central obstacle in embarking or travelling the spiritual path is adherence to “right action” or morality as the distinct traditions informs us. It has been declared, to pursue *Moksha*, the Supreme Identity or Spiritual Realization without the practice of morality is fruitless: “Mental passion pursuing intellectual intuition is like the wind which blows out the light of a candle.”¹¹⁵ For this reason, to understand the Enneagram or any sacred psychology is to engage in a spiritual practice. We turn to a quintessential spiritual method that is capable of being practiced by all and is no less an antidote to the modern and postmodern malaise:

Listen to what I am about to say to you and do not forget it, do not take it lightly or let it go unheeded. In the course of the past fifty-five years or so, I have said to many a brother: every single man has any number of needs, but in reality all men need only one thing, which is truly to practice the remembrance of God; if they have acquired that, they will not want for anything,

whether they possess it or do not possess it.... Without fail, without fail, be constant in your remembrance of your Lord, as He ordained, and cling to your religion with all your strength; God will open the eyes of your intelligence and enlighten your inmost conscience.¹¹⁶

A peculiar fate today awaits all things of a sacred order, as they end up being a product of Western consumption and this is no less the case with the Enneagram. The nine pointed symbol has been usurped to the point where it has been disfigured and no longer resembles its original purpose. As elusive as the Enneagram is, its proponents for the most part have stopped asking the fundamental question as to its origins, yet without knowing this, the Enneagram remains perpetually veiled in mystery. What this indicates at the innermost core of the contemporary psyche is the massive spiritual hunger and all of the ways that it tries to satiate itself through all and everything but that which can cure this condition.

It is to Bakhtiar's efforts alone that have led contemporaries back to the spiritual roots of the Enneagram or the Presence of God (*wajh Allah*), which reside beyond the codification of personality types and the psychological order. In the efforts to clarify the traditional Enneagram with that of the modern Enneagram, it is imperative to emphasize that at its root is the confusion of levels. The modern Enneagram of personality types misses the mark with regard to the transcendent nature of Personality *in divinis*. In Bakhtiar's commitment to traditional Sufism and the universality of the spiritual traditions, she has brought a tremendous gift to contemporary seekers, psychologists and therapists alike, as they now have the tools to discern the integral psychology and foremost integral spirituality underscoring the traditional Enneagram. It might take some time for those within this compromised *milieu* to fully comprehend Bakhtiar's contribution, but her work will unquestionably serve those who seek answers to the deepest question of—"Who am I?"—as the spiritual path is the process of the Divine seeking the Divine as echoed in the words of the Prophet: "He who knows himself knows his Lord."

Endnotes

1 Shaykh Abd Allah al-Faiz ad-Daghestani, quoted in Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, “A Meeting with Gurdjieff,” in *Classical Islam and the Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition* (Washington, DC: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2004), p. 404.

2 René Guénon, “Individualism,” in *The Crisis of the Modern World*, trans. Arthur Osborne, Marco Pallis and Richard C. Nicholson (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004), pp. 56-57.

3 Helen Palmer, quoted in “Special Forum: The Enneagram in Contention,” *Gnosis*, No. 42 (Winter 1997), p. 14.

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Waking Up: Overcoming the Obstacles to Human Potential (Boston, MA: New Science Library, 1986); Charles T. Tart, *Open Mind, Discriminating Mind: Reflections on Human Possibilities* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989); Robert Frager and James Fadiman, “Sufism,” in *Personality and Personal Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1984), pp. 478-513.

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